



## **POLICY FOR RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

September 2023

### **Introduction**

This policy is based on documents approved by Bristol and Salisbury diocesan boards of education for use in their church schools. The school's policy is also fully compliant with the DfE's Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE 2020 and Health Education 2019).

Relationships Education and Health Education are compulsory for primary aged children. Primary Schools may choose to extend the former to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). RSE is always taught in an age appropriate way. Sensitivity and respect should be shown to all children when teaching about personal relationships and sex education and RSE should be taught in a way to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home/personal circumstances. In this regard we comply with the Equality Act.

### **Context**

All RSE in a Church of England school should be set in a context that is consistent with the school's Christian ethos and values.

- RSE should be based on inclusive principles and values, emphasising respect, compassion, loving care and forgiveness.
- RSE should be taught in the light of the belief in the absolute worth of all people.
- RSE should be sensitive to the circumstances of all children and be mindful of the variety of expressions of family life in our culture.
- Issues regarding human sexuality should be addressed sensitively.
- The exploration of reproduction and sexual behaviour within the science curriculum should stand alongside the exploration of relationships, values and morals and Christian belief, in a non-judgemental manner.

Whilst pupils are given the opportunity to explore their own attitudes, values and beliefs and to develop an individual moral code that will guide their actions, this is exercised within an understanding of the right of people to hold their own views within a framework of respect for others.

### **Aims and objectives**

We teach children about:

- The physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults;
- The way humans reproduce;
- Respect for their own bodies and committed, long term and loving relationships;
- The importance of mental as well as physical wellbeing;
- The importance of commitment and family life;
- Moral questions;
- Relationship issues;
- Respect for the views of other people;
- What they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters.

### **Our objectives**

We aim to ensure that our pupils:

- will develop self-esteem and good relationships, respecting differences between people;
- will have confidence to talk, listen, think and reflect about feelings and relationships;
- are able to name the parts of the body and describe how their bodies work;
- are equipped with the life skills to deal with issues of personal safety;
- are prepared and supported at the appropriate time for the changes brought about by puberty;
- understand that their rate of development may be different to others in the same age-range.

Our teachers aim to:

- develop an understanding of risk factors and those skills and strategies that will bring an awareness of, and safety from, exploitation, sexting/photos, through use of discussion and role play;
- be sympathetic towards, and prepare for, the changes in children as adolescence approaches;
- counteract misleading myths and false assumptions;
- challenge prejudice and promote equal opportunity.

### **Principles**

RSE should be based on the following principles:

- The sanctity of marriage is an important belief in many religious teachings and practices.
- Children should learn the significance of families as key building blocks of community and society.
- RSE includes learning about physical and emotional development.
- RSE is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process.
- Children should be made aware of the ways in which advertising and the media influences their views about sexuality.
- Children should be taught to have respect for their own and other people's bodies.

- Children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity.
- Children need to learn the importance of protecting themselves, and how to report abuse.
- Children should learn that it is important to build positive relationships that involve trust and respect.
- Children need to learn how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and other forms of technology.
- Children need to be aware of responsible use of all forms of technology in order to respect the well-being and integrity of others.

### **Organisation**

We teach RSE through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main RSE teaching in our Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship (PSHEC) curriculum, we also teach some RSE through other subject areas (for example, in science), where we feel that this contributes significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing. Our approach to RSE will be in line with KS1 and KS2 resource from the Diocese called 'Love and Sex Matters'. In this resource there are a series of 7 lessons for Y2 and Y6. In addition to this the PSHE Association has lesson plans for Year 1 to Year 6 which cover RSE in an age appropriate way. In Year 5 Science children are also taught about life cycles. In PSHE education we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues. We teach about the parts of the body and how these work, and we explain to them what will happen to their bodies during puberty. For example, in KS2 we tell the children that boys' voices will change during puberty and we explain about menstruation. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.

In science lessons, in KS2, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the guidance material in the national curriculum for science. In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

In Key Stage 1 PHSE children begin to reflect upon the importance of relationships. In Religious Education children will learn about the commitment some people make to each other in marriage and how this is expressed in marriage ceremonies. They will learn about the beliefs and values that underpin this commitment and support the nurture and care of children in the family.

In Years 4, 5 and 6 we place a particular emphasis on body changes and puberty, as many children experience the onset of puberty from this age. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are conceived and born, how their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children. Particular care will be taken in the way these programmes are taught to SEND children. In brief, Year 4 covers body changes; Year 5 covers puberty and in Year 6 we build on this with how babies are conceived and born. Where appropriate the class may be split to cover aspects relating to boys and girls separately, with a member of staff of the appropriate gender. Parents are welcome to view any of the materials

used to teach the curriculum. If a child raises a question which is not covered by the curriculum and/or is not age appropriate, parents will be consulted to agree an appropriate response.

### **The role of parents in sex education**

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective, we:

- Inform parents about the school's RSE policy and practice;
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE of their child;
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in school;
- Inform parents about the teaching of RSE in school so that the parents and school can work together to support the child with regard to RSE. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies and their increasing responsibilities.

We expect all children and parents to engage fully with the Relationships, Sex and Health Education programmes that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from RSE lessons, they should discuss this with the Headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not want their child to participate in. The school will work with families to ensure that an appropriate way forward can be found, which respects the wishes of parents and complies with the school's legal obligations. The Headteacher will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in primary schools, other than as part of the science curriculum. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

### **Parent/School/Community Co-operation and Involvement**

Parents play the major role in helping children to cope with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up by answering their questions and preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings. The teaching offered by the school will be complementary to, and supportive of, the role of parents in the home and in the community, in fostering:

- self-esteem and respect for others;
- sensitivity to the feelings of other people;
- a sense of moral responsibility;
- a regard for the effect behaviour has on others and the consequences;
- consideration in the way we talk to each other that is not demeaning to ourselves nor hurtful to others;
- knowledge about our own bodies, good hygiene and how to keep fit and healthy;
- the confidence to say "no" to strangers, identifying who such strangers might be in various situations;
- the skill to recognise, avoid and resist unwanted sexual experiences;
- the ability to think critically, thus minimising risk;
- knowledge of who can be trusted to share worries or give help, in various situations;
- safe use of mobile and internet technologies.

**The role of other members of the community**

We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our RSE programme.

**Confidentiality and safeguarding children procedures**

Teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved, in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that he/she may have been a victim of abuse. If the teachers have concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Headteacher and/or the designated teacher for child protection and safeguarding. The Headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals. (See also Child Protection Policy.)

**Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body.

**Date:** September 2023